



# NASA Policy Directive

**NPD 3511.1A**Effective Date: July 12, 2021  
Expiration Date: July 12, 2026**COMPLIANCE IS MANDATORY FOR NASA EMPLOYEES**[Printable Format \(PDF\)](#)

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## **Subject: Classification, Position Management and Promotions**

**Responsible Office: Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer**

### **1. Policy**

a. It is NASA's policy to maintain a sound position management and classification program. This includes the following:

- (1) Ensuring organizational structures provide for the efficient distribution of staff resources, proper design of jobs and work methods, and appropriate spans of control.
- (2) Developing and maintaining Position Descriptions (PDs) and associated documents that support the classification determination (i.e., pay plan, series, title, and grade) in the Agency's electronic Position Description Library.
- (3) Reviewing and recertifying the content and position classification of all General Schedule (GS) positions annually concurrent with the employee's performance plan creation to ensure PDs are current and accurate.

b. When promoting an employee based on a classification action, it is NASA's policy to:

- (1) Allow accretion of duties promotions. When a position is classified at a higher grade because of additional duties, job growth, or evolution of duties, an employee may be non-competitively promoted to the higher grade when there are no other employees in similar positions within the work unit.
- (2) Allow impact of the person on the job promotions. Management may non-competitively promote an employee when their position is classified at a higher-grade level solely based on significant contributions of the individual employee in situations when their personal achievements in the field advances the scope/impact of the job sufficiently to warrant a higher grade for the position.

### **2. APPLICABILITY**

a. This directive is applicable to NASA Headquarters and NASA Centers, including Component Facilities and Technical and Service Support Centers. This NPD applies to all GS and equivalent positions Agency wide.

b. In this directive, all document citations are assumed to be the latest version unless otherwise noted.

c. In this directive, the terms "may" denotes a discretionary privilege or permission, "can" denotes statements of possibility or capability, "should" denotes a good practice and is recommended, but not required, "will" denotes expected outcome, and "are/is" denotes descriptive material.

d. The Office of Inspector General has statutory independence and may create a separate classification, position management, and promotion program that meets its mission requirements.

### **3. AUTHORITY**

a. Classification, 5 U.S.C. Ch. 51.

b. Pay Rates and Systems, 5 U.S.C. §§ 5301-5307.

- c. Promotion and Internal Placement, 5 CFR pt. 335.
- d. Classification, 5 CFR pt. 511.
- e. Prevailing Rate Systems, 5 CFR pt. 532.
- f. NPD 3000.1, Human Capital Management.

#### **4. Applicable Documents and Forms**

- a. NSREF-3000-0299, NASA Classification and Promotions Desk Guide for all GS and FWS Employees, dated January 2013.
- b. NASA Desk Guide #15, NASA Supplemental Classification System, dated December 2001.

#### **5. RESPONSIBILITY**

- a. The Chief Human Capital Officer (CHCO) is responsible for:
  - (1) Policy direction and oversight of the Agency's position management and classification program to ensure that NASA's classification program supports the Agency's human capital strategic goals.
  - (2) Approving all human resources information systems and/or automated system materials that support the classification program.
  - (3) Establishing procedures and making final decisions on Agency-level and OPM classification and job grading appeals and ensuring appropriate action is taken.
  - (4) Directing occupational studies, including the basic code structure of NASA occupational specializations (i.e., NASA's Supplemental Classification System (NSCS)) and the requirements for NASA's single Agency qualification standards for Aerospace Technology (AST) positions.
  - (5) Documenting classification decisions (e.g., narrative evaluation statements).
  - (6) Assisting management with conducting periodic reviews/recertification of the content and position classification of established PDs.
  - (7) Updating PDs impacted by new or revised OPM classification standards within the OPM-specified timeframe.
  - (8) Responding to requests for desk audits.
  - (9) Deciding on first-level classification appeals from Agency employees.
  - (10) Assessing formal classification appeal requests in accordance with established Agency procedures and providing a written analysis of findings.
  - (11) In accordance with NSREF-3000-0299, NASA Classification and Promotions Desk Guide, and the NASA Desk Guide #15, Supplemental Classification System, implement applicable Agency guidance.
- b. Management officials and supervisors are responsible for ensuring a sound position management and classification program by guaranteeing organizational structures provide for the efficient distribution of staff resources, proper design of jobs and work methods, and appropriate spans of control. This includes the following:
  - (1) Determining the need for positions and organization work in a cost- effective and efficient manner.
  - (2) Ensuring organizational structure provides for the efficient distribution of staff resources and appropriate mix of supervisory, professional, technical, and administrative positions to perform the assigned work.
  - (3) Initiating necessary corrective action when major changes in duties and responsibilities appear to have an impact on pay, Federal Labor Standards Act (FLSA) determination, risk designation, position sensitivity, drug testing designation, etc.
  - (4) Informing employees of their assigned duties and responsibilities and ensuring employees have a copy of their PD.

#### **6. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY**

- a. The NASA Administrator is delegated classification authority based on Classification, 5 U.S.C. ch. 51. The Administrator delegates classification authority as follows:

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(1) The CHCO, or designee, is delegated classification authority Agency wide. This authority may be redelegated in writing.

(2) The CHCO, or designee, is delegated the authority to adjudicate Agency- level classification appeals. This authority may be redelegated in writing.

## **7. MEASUREMENT/VERIFICATION**

None.

## **8. CANCELLATION**

NPD 3511.1, Classification, Position Management and Promotions, dated October 3, 2014.

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**/s/ Bill Nelson**  
**Administrator**

## **ATTACHMENT A: (TEXT)**

### **ATTACHMENT A. Definitions**

Accretion of duties promotions. May occur when an employee's position is classified at a higher grade because of additional duties and responsibilities, job growth, or evolution of duties over time.

Impact of the person on the job promotions. When the contributions of an individual make the position materially different from the current job classification, an impact of the person on the job promotion may occur. Such promotions are discretionary actions and are based on exemplary qualifications of an employee in situations when their personal achievements in the field advance the scope/impact of the job sufficiently to warrant a higher grade for the position.

Non-competitive promotion. A promotion of an employee that is a discretionary exception to competitive procedures required under NASA's internal competitive placement plans.

Position Management. Continuous and systematic process to ensure organizations and positions are structured efficiently and effectively (i.e., determining the number, types, and grade levels of positions required to fulfill a certain function/mission).

## **ATTACHMENT B. Acronyms**

AST Aerospace Technology

CHCO Chief Human Capital Officer

CFR Code of Federal Regulations

FLSA Federal Labor Standards Act

GS General Schedule

HR Human Resources

NPD NASA Policy Directive

NSCS NASA's Supplemental Classification System

OCHCO Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer

OPM Office of Personnel Management

PD Position Description

U.S.C. United States Code

## **ATTACHMENT C. References**

C.1 5 U.S.C. § 2301, Merit System Principles.

C.2 5 U.S.C. § 2302, Prohibited Personnel Practices.

C.3 29 U.S.C. § 201, Fair Labor Standards Act.

C.4 OPM Introduction to Position Classification Standards, August 2009.

C.5 OPM's Handbook of Occupational Groups and Families, December 2018.

## **(URL for Graphic)**

### **DISTRIBUTION:** **NODIS**

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